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Governor



JAMES M. Le BLANC
Secretary

State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Private Lafayette Work Release Facility Closed

(Lafayette) Department of Public Safety and Corrections Secretary (DPS&C) James M. LeBlanc ordered the removal of state inmates from the privately-operated Lafayette Community Correctional Center (LCCC) work release program effective Tuesday, February 26, 2008. Fifty offenders from LCCC's program were transferred to the Lafayette Parish Correctional Center work release program Tuesday.

The Department has been looking into operational issues at LCCC since September 2007 and it has recently become apparent that the work release program is operating at a significant financial loss. The Department has notified the state Legislative Auditor's Office as well as the Lafayette Parish District Attorney's Office of preliminary findings and we will follow-up with these agencies once our investigation is complete.

DPS&C personnel are poring over numerous financial documents in order to ascertain the scope of the deficit and how it occurred. What is clear is that money owed to offenders for performing work release jobs was not being properly accounted for. The Department is making every effort to ensure that offenders are made whole financially.

"Work release allows offenders not only to build job skills, but also to accumulate savings before they are released into the community," explained Secretary James LeBlanc. "This money is important to the offender and his family and the Department is currently exploring options that will ensure releasing offenders have access to the money they earned while in the work release program."

The Department would like to extend its thanks to Lafayette Parish Sheriff Mike Neustrom for allowing offenders to transfer to his work release program. The Department anticipates that most offenders will keep the jobs they have, while some may require a transfer to another work release program.

The Department will issue more information on the LCCC closure once the internal investigation is complete.

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